

COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Policy and Procedure Manual

REPORT PREPARATION

Approved By: Kenneth Burton Chief of Police
CALEA 6th Edition Standard:

344 REPORT PREPARATION

344.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of reports is to document sufficient information to refresh the member's memory and to provide sufficient information for follow-up investigation and successful prosecution. Report writing is the subject of substantial formal and on-the-job training.

344.1.1 REPORT PREPARATION

Members should ensure that their reports are sufficiently detailed for their purpose and reasonably free of errors prior to submission. It is the responsibility of the assigned member to enter all reports taken during the shift before going off-duty, unless permission to delay submission of the report has been approved by a supervisor. Generally, reports requiring prompt follow-up action on active leads or arrest reports where the suspect remains in custody should not be delayed.

Handwritten reports (e.g. citations, AIR forms, etc) must be prepared legibly. If the report is not legible, the submitting member will be required by the report reviewer to promptly make corrections and resubmit the report. Members who dictate reports shall use appropriate grammar, as content is not the responsibility of the typist.

All reports shall accurately reflect the identity of the persons involved, witnesses, all pertinent information seen, heard or assimilated by any other sense and any actions taken. Members shall not suppress, conceal or distort the facts of any reported incident, nor shall any member make a false report orally or in writing. Generally, the reporting member's opinions should not be included in reports unless specifically identified as such.

344.2.1 CRIMINAL ACTIVITY REPORTING

When a member responds to a call for service, or as a result of self-initiated activity becomes aware of any activity where a crime has occurred, the member is required to document the activity. The fact that a victim does not desire prosecution is not an exception to documentation. The following are examples of required documentation:

- a) In every instance where a felony has been reported or observed, the documentation shall take the form of a written report
- b) All incidents involving reports of domestic violence
- c) All arrests

344.2.2 NON-CRIMINAL ACTIVITY

The following incidents shall be documented using the appropriate approved report:

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- a) Anytime a person is reported missing (regardless of jurisdiction)
- b) Suspicious incidents that may indicate a potential for crimes against children or that a child's safety is in jeopardy
- c) All protective custody detentions
- d) Suspicious incidents that may place the public or others at risk
- e) Whenever the member believes the circumstances should be documented or at the direction of a supervisor

The above list is not an all-inclusive list as other situations may require a report.

344.2.5 MISCELLANEOUS INJURIES

Any injury that is reported to this department shall require a report when:

- 1. The injury is a result of a drug overdose.
- 2. There is an attempted suicide.
- 3. The injury is major or serious, whereas death could result.
- 4. The circumstances surrounding the incident are suspicious and it is desirable to record the event.

The above reporting requirements are not intended to be all-inclusive. A supervisor may direct a member to document any incident he/she deems necessary.

344.3 GENERAL POLICY OF EXPEDITIOUS REPORTING

In general, all members and supervisors shall act with promptness and efficiency in the preparation and processing of all reports. An incomplete report, unorganized reports or reports delayed without supervisory approval are not acceptable. Reports shall be processed according to established priorities or according to special priority necessary under exceptional circumstances.

344.4 REPORT CORRECTIONS

The report reviewer shall review reports for content and accuracy. If a correction is necessary, the report reviewer should note on the report the corrections needed, and/or state the reasons for rejection. The original report and the correction form should be returned to the reporting member for correction as soon as practicable. It shall be the responsibility of the originating member to ensure that any report returned for correction is processed in a timely manner.

344.5 REPORT CHANGES OR ALTERATIONS

Reports that have been approved by a supervisor and submitted to the Records Unit for filing and distribution shall not be modified or altered except by way of a supplemental report. Reviewed reports that have not yet been submitted to the Records Unit may be corrected or modified by the authoring member must be resubmitted for approval.